

A cash-strapped county with an ailing school district wants Scottsdale to pay up for land the city plans to use as a "water farm" for private golf courses.

La Paz County tried to force Scottsdale to pay about \$155,000 in lost property-tax revenue for about 1,021 acres that the city owns along the county's eastern edge. The county assessor is now working with the city to receive some payment for the property.

Scottsdale bought the land in 2013 and plans to transport groundwater from the site for a couple of golf courses and the city's reserve supplies.

The city purchased an additional 250-plus acres this summer so that Scottsdale National Golf Club has enough water to comply with state law to build another 18-

**County land is taxable private property — the rest is federal, state, military, reservation or wildlife reserve land.**

La Paz County issued a property-tax lien on the first 1,021 acres because Scottsdale hadn't made any payments on that property. The city is not at risk of losing its land, however, because state law exempts public entities such as Scottsdale from paying property taxes.

The law does call for cities to make contributions if they move water from another political entity, such as from a different county.

That provision was passed in the early 1990s to compensate counties for shrinking tax rolls when several cities purchased land for water farms.

Scottsdale has not sent contributions to

**See COUNTY, Page 9A**

The Desert Mountain golf community in Scottsdale is one of the city's partners in the La Paz County "water farm" deal.

TOM TINGLE/THE REPUBLIC

## gear up for next year's rate fight

**RYAN RANDAZZO**

THE REPUBLIC • AZCENTRAL.COM

As Arizona's biggest utility prepares for a rate case next year, the company and rooftop-solar advocates are beginning to unleash some of the arguments they will use to try to persuade regulators on whether to change the rules for solar on homes.

Arizona Public Service Co. will propose changes to the system of net metering, under which homeowners with solar panels are paid retail credit for most of the power they send to the grid,

**See SOLAR, Page 8A**

November 24, 2015

## Frame still empty: '85 art heist at UA remains mystery

2 thieves walked out with painting now worth \$100M

**ANNE RYMAN**

THE REPUBLIC • AZCENTRAL.COM

Thirty years ago this week, on the Friday after Thanksgiving, a man and a woman walked into the University of Arizona Museum of Art just as it was opening for the day.

The woman began talking to a securi-

ty guard. The man wandered up to the second floor. Ten minutes later, they left.

The guard became suspicious after they departed so quickly. Moments later, staff discovered an oil painting by modern artist Willem de Kooning was gone.

Police believe the woman distracted the guard while the man sliced the painting out of its frame, rolled up the canvas and slipped the artwork under his coat.

The abstract painting titled "Woman Ochre" has never been seen again. The museum estimates the painting would be

worth more than \$100 million today.

The heist has haunted museum staff ever since. With the 30th anniversary of the theft approaching, they are publicizing the mystery again in hopes the coverage will generate clues for the FBI's Art Theft Team.

"It's eerie," said Olivia Miller, the museum's curator of exhibitions and education. "It's hard knowing our collection is incomplete, and it might never be com-

**See HEIST, Page 6A**



"Woman Ochre" by Willem de Kooning has been missing since it was stolen in 1985.

UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

## From the Front Page

### Heist

Continued from Page 1A

plete.”

Miller and other staffers believe the thieves chose the day after Thanksgiving because the museum would be quieter with more staffers away on vacation. Police found no fingerprints on the empty frame.

A 1985 article in the *Arizona Daily Star* said the woman was between 55 and 60, with reddish-blond, shoulder-length hair partly covered by a scarf. She wore glasses, tan slacks and a red coat. The man, the newspaper said, was 25 to 30, with dark, wavy hair and a mustache. He had on a blue coat with a hood. They fled in a rust-colored car.

Miller said that if stolen paintings aren't found within the first few weeks, it can be decades before they resurface — if ever.

Sometimes, thieves destroy stolen art out of fear of being caught. Other times, a family member will inherit the art and then try to sell the work. The FBI's Art Theft Team estimates that art worth billions of dollars has been stolen and never recovered.

If the FBI recovers the painting, the museum plans to display the art again.

For now, there is only an empty frame where “Woman Ochre” was once displayed.

And many unanswered questions.

Reach the reporter at [anne.ryman@arizonarepublic.com](mailto:anne.ryman@arizonarepublic.com) or 602-444-8072.

### Turkeys

Continued from Page 3A

spokesman Sergio Paris. The food bank has already purchased 2,800 turkeys to help meet the need.

United Food Bank's 10,000-turkey goal is based on Feeding America's 2014 Hunger in America study, Paris said. That study estimated that about 8,500 families were visiting food pantries in the East Valley, Gila County, Pinal County and the southern portions of Navajo and Apache counties.

“Knowing the holidays are an especially strenuous time for low-income families, we figured there would be about another 1,500 households in need, so that is how we came up with a goal of 10,000 turkeys, for 10,000 house-



TOM TINGLE/THE REPUBLIC

United Food Bank's Carl Johns moves frozen turkeys Monday at the food bank's warehouse in Mesa.

holds,” Paris said in an e-mail.

St. Mary's was 1,300 turkeys short of demand, even after collecting 2,200 turkeys this weekend as part of a “Super Saturday” event at 13 different Albertsons locations, spokesman Jerry Brown said.

“That's the most turkeys we've collected on a single day in several years,”

Brown said.

He said the food bank will likely have to serve a different protein, like ham or chicken, if it runs out of turkeys for Thanksgiving.

In the meantime, St. Vincent de Paul has been gearing up for its own event, Turkey Tuesday, which begins at 9 a.m. today. Participants can donate money or turkeys at any Bashas' or

Food City in the Valley.

St. Vincent de Paul aims to collect about 20,000 birds, spokeswoman Mary Chou-Thompson said. She said the food bank probably collected “about 50 to 100” over the weekend at smaller turkey drives.

Chou-Thompson said the goal of 20,000 includes financial donations that would help pay for turkeys and other items at the food bank. She said she doubted that St. Vincent de Paul would have to purchase more turkeys after today, but the organization has reserve funds it could use given a strong enough need. If St. Vincent de Paul runs out of turkeys on Thanksgiving, visitors will still have a holiday meal — it just won't be as special.

“We wouldn't run out of food in our dining room,” Chou-Thompson said.